(a) the details of gods seized at various Airports from January, 1996 till date;

(b) whether the Government have sold these goods;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the procedure adopted for disposal of seized goods?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) to (c). Goods such as gold, silver, Indian & Foreign Currencies, electronic goods, computer parts, cellular phones, precious stones etc., valued at Rs. 8816.42 lakhs were seized at various Airports in the country during the period 1.1.96 to 31.8.96. During the same period Rs. 3505.80 lakhs have been realised by sale of goods seized/confiscated under the Customs Act, 1962 at various Airports in the Country.

(d) After completion of adjudication proceedings the seized consumer goods which have been confiscated and are ripe for disposal are disposed by retail sale at customs counter or through NCCF and Consumer Co-operative Societies. Bulk or trade goods are either auctioned or sold through tender, while hazardous and dangerous goods are destroyed as per instructions issued by the Ministry. Goods of perishable nature which have limited shelf life are disposed off immediately after seizure itself. Confiscated gold and silver are authorised to be disposed through Customs retail counters at Delhi, Mumbai, Calcutta and Madras.

[Translation]

Information Bureaus of CIL

5647. SHRI VIRENDRA KUMAR SINGH : Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state :

(a) the names of the places in the country where Information Bureaus of Coal India Ltd. have been set up;

(b) the annual expenditure incurred by Coal India on its Information Bureaus; and

(c) the objectives behind setting up of these Bureaus?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH) : (a) As per information received from Coal India Limited, no Information Bureau has been set up by the Company.

(b) and (c). Do not arise in view of answer to part (a).

Interest Rates on Loans for Backward Classes

5648. SHRI O.P. JINDAL :
SHRI GANGA CHARAN RAJPUT :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have formulated any scheme to provide loan to people belonging to backward classes at lower rates of interest;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government are aware that public sector banks hesitate in giving loan to the people of backward classes living in rural areas; and

(d) the remedial steps proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) and (b). Under the Differential Rate of Interest (DRI) Scheme, banks grant loan to eligible borrowers in the weaker sections at a concessional rate of interest of 4.0 per cent per annum.

(c) and (d). Reserve Bank of India have reported that they have not received any specific complaint regarding public sector banks' hesitation/reluctance to give loans to persons of backward classes residing in rural areas.

[English]

Share of Export Earnings to States

5649. SHRI ANANTH KUMAR : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Union Government propose to give a share of foreign exchange earned through exports to States so as to ensure greater involvement of State Governments for boosting exports in their respective States;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH) : (a) to (c). Export earnings accrue to the exporters only and the foreign exchange equivalent thereof is reckoned and strengthens the nation's overall balance of payments. States stand to gain from encouraging export oriented units through the linkages these offer to technological upgradation, foreign investments, expansion of employment and heightened competitive advantages.

Bogus Exporters

5650. SHRI P.R. DASMUNSI : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Customs Authority in Bombay detected 170 exporters who had shown bogus exports documents to export PFY Yarns, cloth having weight with a view to get more advance licence etc;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken or proposed to be taken by Government in regard thereto ?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) and (b). Yes, Sir. The Customs authorities have investigated suspected cases of export frauds by 178 exporters and identified 111 exporting firms who have induldged in bogus or mis-declared exports. Out

of this, the Customs authorities in Bombay have investigated 88 export firms involving duty evasion of Rs. 98.57 crores (approx.). These exporters have inflated the net weight of export goods by using forged documents or misdeclared the blend of the fabric, with a view to import excess quantities of Polyester Filament Yarn under the Duty Exemption Scheme. An amount of Rs. 22.23 crores has been recovered during the investigation.

(c) 46 persons including exporters, clearing agents and the persons concerned with exporting firms were arrested, out of which ten persons have been detained under COFEPOSA. Two Customs officers were also arrested under the Customs Act, 1962, besides, six officers placed under suspension. The Licensing authorities have cancelled 184 licences so far. Enforcement Directorate and Income Tax authorities have also been informed in the relevant cases to initiate necessary action under their Acts.

Verification of Coal Stock

5651. SHRI BANWARI LAL PUROHIT : Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state :

(a) the present coal stock position in Coal stockyard of Western Coalfield Limited;

(b) whether the physical verification of the coal stock position in the WCL have ever been held during the past three years;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the responsibility fixed by the Government against those who are showing wrong stock positions ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH) : (a) Western Coalfields Limited (WCL) is not operating any stockyards. However, the overall coal stocks in the mines of WCL as on 31.3.96 were 1.39 million tonnes (provisional).

(b) to (d). Coal India Limited have reported that physical verification of coal stock position in WCL has been done during each of the three previous years.

During the physical verification of stock by CIL Team for the year 1993-94, one case of shortage beyond the permissible limit of 5% was detected in Shivpuri under ground mine of Pench area. Necessary disciplinary action has been initiated.

Further as per check measurement carried out by WCL Head quarter team for the year 1993-94, three cases of shortages beyond permissible limit at Sasti opencast mine, Niljai II opencast mines and Kukurkunda opencast mine were detected. These cases are under investigation for taking appropriate action as per policy in force.

MOU System

5652. SHRI BHAGWAN SHANKAR RAWAT :
DR. KRUPASINDHU BHOI :

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) the reasons for taking the decision for signing MOU regarding sick public sector undertakings;

(b) the expected result of the extension of MOU system to cover sick PSUs.

(c) the allocation made for the year 1996-97 for augmenting the MOU Scheme; and

(d) the further steps being taken to strengthen the said scheme ?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN) : (a) This was done primarily to focus the attention of the managements of sick PSUs on all relevant factors in a set order of priority so as to make the revival package of sick PSUs more broad based and thus enhance the success of the package.

(b) It is expected that the extension of MOU system to cover sick PSUs will help in revival of these sick PSUs through focus on improvement in efficiency, productivity and better profitability.

(c) No separate allocation is made for MOU scheme. The expenditure is met out of the Budget for Department of Public Enterprises.

(d) The following steps have been taken to strengthen the MOU scheme.

(i) The ACRs of the Chief Executives of MOU signing PSEs has been linked to the MOU score in order to improve accountability.

(ii) To improve target setting, bench marking studies are being carried out by professional bodies in respect of various sectors. One such study in respect of Fertilizers sector has been completed.

(iiii) 60% of wieght in the MOUs has been allocated to financial criteria is order to ensure fiscal discipline.

Loan Waiver Scheme in J & K

5653. DR. M. JAGANNATH : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) the amount of loan proposed to be waived from the accounts of various banks in Jammu and Kashmir and the criteria laid down for such waiver ;

(b) whether the Union Government propose to pay the amount back to the banks as a measure of public accountability;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) to (d). As per the statement made by Hon'ble Prime Minister in both the Houses of Parliament on 2nd August, 1996, announcing an economic package for the State of Jammu and Kashmir, the Government proposes